



ASA 25/009/2011
5 September 2011

ADPAN welcomes the 5000th day with no executions in South Korea
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The Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN) welcomes the fact that 8 September 2011 marks the 5,000th day with no executions in South Korea. The Anti-Death Penalty regional network which works across the region for abolition hopes that this day provides a compelling reason for introducing a moratorium and supporting steps towards total abolition.

ADPAN is also using this opportunity to ask South Korea's National Assembly members to support legislative measures aimed at abolishing the death penalty. In doing this, South Korea will be using its leadership as a member of the current Human Rights Council at the United Nations and across all countries in Asia and the Pacific.

The journey towards abolition of the death penalty is long and not without obstacles. But many countries are increasingly either abolishing or limiting its use. In Mongolia last year the President declared a moratorium on all executions and the parliament is considering ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The protection of all citizens' human rights is an important concern for all those elected to lead. The death penalty violates the right to life and is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. There is no convincing evidence of its deterrent effect on crime, but the risks and flaws of its application are clear and evident in all countries that impose the death penalty.

As of today, 96 countries have abolished the death penalty for all crimes. Draft legislation aiming at abolishing the death penalty is now awaiting consideration in the Legislative and Judiciary Committee of the South Korean National Assembly.

ADPAN joins with other members from South Korea, Amnesty International, the World Coalition against the Death Penalty, Murder Victim's Families for Human Rights as well as representatives of South Korean civil society, religious groups and members of the National Assembly in urging Members of the Legislative and

Judiciary Committee to promptly consider and vote in favour of the proposed legislation to abolish the death penalty in South Korea.

So long as the death penalty remains on the statute books, and death sentences continue to be imposed, the risk of a return to the use of this cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment remains a reality.

Out of the 41 countries from Asia and the Pacific, 27 have abolished the death penalty in law and in practice. Of the 14 countries that still retain the death penalty, executions are decreasing and its use overall is less frequent.

ADPAN members across Asia and the Pacific are undertaking activities in South Korea to mark this day. ADPAN has members in over 23 countries mainly in Asia and the Pacific and campaigns for an end to the death penalty.

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